

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I am honored to say that I was one of the co-sponsors of the request for the Congressional Gold Medal for the marines. And I did so for them, I did so because of the history that it represents, but I also did so because when you support any of our military people, you're supporting all of them.

It was important to send a message that we support those persons who made it possible for others to have opportunities, but at the same time we're supporting those who are serving today in faraway places who desire to be at home with their families. We support their families who are supporting them. And regardless as to how people feel about various wars, every person ought to want all of our troops to come home safely.

I support them. I support what we're doing to let the world know that what they have done should be recognized with a Congressional Gold Medal.

□ 1550

INFRASTRUCTURE JOBS AND ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is a story about American jobs. This is the story about American jobs and the story of where our money is misspent, how it hurts States, the United States, and how we can change that trend. It's how some U.S. policies currently are hurting U.S. citizens, and it's a story of how we can change policies, we can clean up our environment, create jobs, have clean air, clean land and clean water. It's about growing jobs without increasing our debt, borrowing from China, or raising taxes.

This is a story of the new American Dream for the next generation; the story that says if we have the will, we also have the way. It's a story that makes America back to work again. And best of all, it's a story that can come true. We can do this because we have the road to energy independence and American prosperity mapped out with this bill, H.R. 1861.

Today, a number of Members from both sides of the aisle, the Bipartisan Working Group on Energy, will describe America's needs and show how this bill provides the means to rebuild our aging infrastructure and meet America's growing energy needs and will grow millions of jobs, not for 90 days, not for one election season, but for 20 years into the future. This bill moves us towards energy independence.

But first, before we get into that, I want to talk about the energy needs of the world and what's happening with our own economy. We all recognize, and every Member of this House is con-

cerned with the debt of this Nation which is now \$14.5 trillion. It's 97 percent of the value of our economy. It's \$45,000 for each man, woman and child, and growing at \$58,000 a second.

We are all concerned that more than 25 million Americans are out of work or looking for more work. We are all concerned that we've lost 5 million manufacturing jobs to other countries in the last decade. We all know the global demand for energy is going to grow by 53 percent by the year 2035. And total U.S. consumption of liquid fuels, including both fossil fuels and biofuels, is going to rise from about 18.8 million barrels per day to 21.9 million barrels per day by the year 2035.

Now, we know that many people would like to have us get off oil, but we're still going to need oil, not only for transportation, but for manufacturing, for plastics and for chemical development. It is not something we can turn our back on, but it's something we need to recognize is a treasure out there that we can use, not only to stop sending our money overseas, but also to develop American jobs.

Keep in mind we can turn our energy around through energy because energy equals jobs. We import 65 percent of our oil, and some of that from hostile regimes. The U.S. currently imports roughly 20 percent, or 5 million barrels a day, from members of OPEC. The United States spends about \$1 billion a day on foreign oil, or \$129 billion each year from OPEC nations.

By converting to natural gas, 18 million diesel trucks and fleet vehicles which return to a central location overnight would cut OPEC imports in half. Choosing to enact no change in policy related to natural gas is the same as choosing to remain reliant on OPEC nations for our economic vitality. Our bill helps finance this conversion.

Gas costs families about \$2,200 more a year than it did in 2009. And this House, this Chamber, has talked about energy independence since the 1973 oil embargo. The demand for energy is growing and growing; and, unfortunately, OPEC exerts control over world oil prices and has asked that it someday be \$200 per barrel. We think it affects our economy now at where it is. Imagine what would happen when it reaches that level.

The Department of the Interior, however, estimates that we have between 86 billion and 115 billion barrels on our Outer Continental Shelf. That is enough oil and gas to replace imports from Venezuela and Saudi Arabia for the next 80 years, extensive tracts of oil, which, by the way, were last surveyed for the most part in the 1970s. And it's quite likely that also given areas that have not been reviewed or surveyed since then would have many times that amount.

Offshore exploration, including the revenues that come from the leasing, from the royalties, is about \$440 billion alone. When you add everything else

that can come from this, with over a million jobs a year, with manufacturing, the economic impact of this exceeds \$8 trillion overall for our country. And new Federal revenues are estimated to be between \$2.2 trillion and \$3.7 trillion over the next 20 years.

Our option is to continue to buy from foreign nations which aren't friendly to us. Think of what happens with this \$129 billion a year we send to OPEC nations, nations that oftentimes we send blood and treasure of our soldiers and our money to go protect. And what do they do with our money as well? They build islands, great highways, palaces.

Now, we recognize that many folks around the world are our allies, but we also have to recognize we are here to take care of our citizens and make sure our citizens have an opportunity to compete for jobs in America.

Ultimately, here's the problem America faces right now in our energy infrastructure. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, America's infrastructure is crumbling. It would take \$930 billion to rebuild our roads and bridges; \$87 billion for aviation; \$12.5 billion to rebuild our dams that are breaking and our locks; \$255 billion for sewer and water infrastructure rebuilt in America, where we're leaking massive amounts of water every year in our clean water; \$75 billion for energy infrastructure in this Nation; \$50 billion for inland waterways; \$50 billion for levees; \$63 billion for rail; and \$265 billion for our transit system.

What we would do is open up those areas for offshore drilling. And, quite frankly, I trust our ability to do it. Yes, there have been mistakes, but they have been rare; and I certainly trust our folks to explore for offshore resources and make sure they follow environmental laws to the letter.

But in this process of creating jobs and dedicating the revenue from this act, keep in mind we do not raise taxes, we do not borrow from China, and we do not buy this oil from OPEC. Instead, we create our jobs. We create our jobs now and in the long term.

We rebuild America's crumbling bridges and roads. We invest in clean American energy, not just talking about cleaning up our coal-fired power plants, not just talking about it would be nice to have nuclear power, not just saying it will be great if people can conserve more energy, because 40 percent of the energy of typical homes and buildings is oftentimes wasted through incredible energy inefficiency. We pay for that energy, but we don't get it. We pay to heat our homes and light our homes and cool our homes and offices; but whenever we are wasting that energy, that's power plants we don't need to have built.

There's also wasted energy in the areas that have to do with how our grid structure is so inefficient, but we can actually clean up the environment and conserve energy; and we can do all of this without raising taxes, as we said.

Now, I said this is a bipartisan bill, and I'd like to turn to a number of my

colleagues today to talk about how this can be done, and to hear the kind of support we have for this as we move through.

With that, I would like to yield to my colleague from California, Mr. JIM COSTA.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you very much. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his explanation of what truly is a bipartisan effort.

Mr. Speaker, I do rise, like my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, to support H.R. 1861, titled the Infrastructure Jobs and Energy Independence Act of 2011.

Those of you who are watching on C-SPAN, take note: this is a bipartisan effort. It's the kind of thing I think most of you in this country want us to do in Congress every day. This measure—and the four important points to note that we all concur in and what America wants us to do is provide us a path to energy independence, it revitalizes our Nation's transportation, water infrastructure and other investments in our infrastructure that equal jobs, jobs, and jobs. It reduces the deficit with no new taxes, and it is a bipartisan effort, one that is supported on both sides of the aisle.

□ 1600

Several years ago, I joined with my colleagues from both sides to develop this sensible energy policy that acknowledges the challenges for our Nation's energy, both in the short term, the near term, the medium, and the long term, over the next 20 years. Similar to what we have done in previous Congresses, we formed this bipartisan energy working group, which includes my colleagues, Representative TIM MURPHY, who just spoke, Congressman TIM WALZ, Congressman BILL SHUSTER, and myself and other Members whom you will hear talk about why we feel this is the path we ought to pursue.

The Infrastructure Jobs and Energy Independence Act was developed by Members who are speaking here today, sitting down and talking to one another—not by lobbyists. We hammered this plan out over a period of months, having worked off of previous efforts in legislation that was introduced in previous Congresses. This is what's needed in Washington, and unfortunately, too often, it doesn't happen—the art of the political compromise. These aren't Republican or Democratic ideas, these are simply good, commonsense ideas that put America's energy future first.

Time and time again, I see too many Members rising on the House floor focusing on their talking points, giving the stump speeches. That's nice, but it doesn't comport with the reality of the challenges we face today in many instances. This legislation, however, does. Sound bites like “drill baby drill” or “use it or lose it” may sound good to certain constituencies, but I do not believe they constitute an energy policy.

This legislation, H.R. 1861, constitutes a real energy policy over the

next 20 years. Let me talk about what this measure would do to enhance our path. First, it would expand domestic energy production on the Outer Continental Shelf. Secondly, it would advance alternative energy, including wind, solar, biomass, wave, geothermal, and other clean alternatives. Third, it would rebuild our Nation's roads, bridges, dams, water, and sewer systems—that, as Congressman MURPHY indicated today, is estimated to have a pricetag of over \$900 billion. Fourth, it would develop clean coal energy technology, which we have an abundance of supply in. Fifth, it would develop ways in which we can finance nuclear energy technologies. Sixth, it would expand the use of energy-efficiency products and alternative fuel vehicles. Seventh, it would restore and protect our Nation's wildlife refuges, national parks, lakes, and waterways.

And how would it do all this? It would help also to assist in paying off our national debt. Why? Because the funds that we receive for energy on fossil fuels, both onshore and offshore on federal lands, is the second-largest single source of revenue that comes to the United States Treasury outside of the taxes we pay. It's the revenue that we would derive by expanding energy sources onshore and offshore that would go to pay for these efforts.

As a nation, we have to work towards a realistic energy policy. Our economy needs it. We can no longer afford to take any energy sources off the table. And while we tackle these problems, we have to rebuild our aging infrastructure. H.R. 1861 does that by dedicating these funds to that effort without raising taxes. As many of you know, I'm a firm believer in using all the energy tools in our energy toolbox, conventional energy together with renewable resources. A strategy for energy conservation while upgrading our transmission lines will best serve our long-term energy needs.

In closing, I'd like to continue to work with my colleagues on this collaboration. As was noted, since our first energy crisis in 1973, we have had a host of energy plans by previous Congresses and previous administrations. What's different between this and those efforts? I'll tell you what's different. We have not had the ability to get together, in a bipartisan fashion, to agree on one energy policy, stick with it, and implement it over the next 20 years.

H.R. 1861 allows us the path to do that. I look forward to working with my colleagues in a bipartisan effort to ensure that, once and for all, we put America first, put our politics behind us, and introduce—not only this introduction, but to do everything we can to enact H.R. 1861 both in the House and in the Senate and get this to the President's desk.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind the Members that remarks in debate must be addressed to the Chair and not to any potential viewing audience outside the Chamber.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I would now like to yield to the gentlelady from West Virginia, Ms. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO.

Mrs. CAPITO. I would like to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for having this Special Order to discuss two really important issues: America's energy supply and our transportation infrastructure. And I'm really pleased that we have a bipartisan group here. We started like this several years ago. We all kind of closed ourselves into a room, Members only, to discuss our Nation's great needs. Many of us share the same types of States, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana, where we know energy production. We know the jobs that it creates, we know how valuable it is to our country, but we also know that certain parts of our country are more reliant on certain sources of energy, particularly a State like mine, and Pennsylvania and Indiana, as well, I believe, with coal and other fossil fuels.

And so in concern of disadvantaging certain parts of our country because of our abundance of energy and our reliance on certain resources, we got together to try to solve some problems. And so H.R. 1861, I think, goes a long way. Mr. MURPHY has talked a lot about what this means in terms of our reliance on foreign sources of oil, he's talked a lot about the direct translation of energy into jobs.

We share a portion of our States bordering one another where we can see the energy sector exploding around the Marcellus shale. I'm from the northern part of West Virginia that borders on the Pennsylvania area where the shale is most prevalent, and just to see the creation of not just jobs in that industry, but jobs in the car lots, jobs in the county courthouse, jobs in the local restaurants and hotels, is exciting for a downtrodden area of our country. And so we know that further exploration on our Outer Continental Shelf will explode in terms of jobs. So he has a bill.

I also have a bill out that has a little bit narrower focus, and it is H.R. 2983, and I've nicknamed it the REBAR bill. As we all know, good nicknames for bills are always catchy. My bill has the same premise, which is maximizing our energy resources in the Outer Continental Shelf to generate billions of dollars. Mine has a more narrow focus because of the 9.1 percent unemployment situation that we find ourselves in right now and in the near future. I focus mostly on, or exclusively on, really, infrastructure development in terms of roads and bridges, and then our water and inland waterways. West Virginia also borders the Ohio River. We've got aging infrastructure. Some of our locks are over 100 years old. The Inland Waterways Trust Fund cannot possibly meet the demands of the need that is apparent on our waterways. We also have large estimates of \$930 billion for roads and bridges. We all know the gas tax is not going to meet this demand. We have been funding the trust

fund for our highways for years. In recent years it has been to the tune of billions of dollars every year to meet the shortfall. States can't plan, companies can't hire, and equipment makers can't produce. There's all kinds of stalling that's gone on because of the uncertainty in our Highway Trust Fund.

We've set up a structure where you have a bill that lasts for 6 years so that you can plan, so that you can look at the future of all of our transportation needs. But if we don't fund that, we're not going to go anywhere, and we're not going to create the jobs that are going to be immediately created by a good and robust infrastructure bill.

The President talks about infrastructure. Many Members talk about infrastructure. But the next question doesn't get asked: How are we going to pay for this? And that's what I think is particularly creative about this bill, and I would say along the same lines as the bill that I had put in for consideration.

So I think it's something that obviously crosses party lines. The urgency is there. The win/win situation for a bill such as this is apparent on energy production, job creation, and infrastructure development. Those are the three pillars of a—I'm going to say it's a three-pronged stool. These are the three pillars that grow from this act. I think we should act on this. I think we've got critical mass in this House to be able to push something like this through.

□ 1610

As a member of the bipartisan energy group, I'm going to keep working with my fellow colleagues here today to see that we push this forward and that the American people understand the great importance and the great future that this will hold in terms of the growth of our country.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentlelady from West Virginia.

I might add, as she was speaking about the Marcellus shale—this vast natural gas deposit which is underground in the States of New York, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and others—I know Pennsylvania has realized revenues from that in the billions of dollars and direct jobs of around 50,000. We're already talking about a couple hundred thousand jobs that can come from this and that we will have the benefits of that Marcellus shale natural gas over the next 30 years.

I bring that up because, although that is being drilled now and being brought to market now, it is a tiny, tiny fraction of what we're talking about in the coastal areas that we will drill in a responsible way and use to create American jobs. With the many millions of Americans out of work who want to work and who want good-paying jobs, we know one of the greatest threats to our country right now is poverty. The government can't provide

all of those. We can let the private sector grow, and we can let these jobs come through, so we begin to work on these many areas of rebuilding America.

I would like to turn to one of my colleagues, one of the prime sponsors of this bill now, to talk more about the issues here, Mr. TIM WALZ of Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. To the gentleman from Pennsylvania, thank you for your energy, your passion, your vision. Thank you also to all the folks who've gathered here.

Mr. Speaker, you're witnessing an all too rare event in this House—a group of bipartisan legislators coming together and working for the common good and rejecting the politics of division, rejecting the politics of the false choices—the either/ors—and coming together with the respect and understanding that this Nation can innovate, can become energy independent and, at the same time, can protect those vital natural resources.

You have a spectrum of folks who come from coal-producing West Virginia, from Pennsylvania, from Indiana, from California, from the plains of Minnesota. You have Members here who have a wide spectrum of political beliefs, but you also have folks here who have been in the business of producing energy, and you've got folks speaking who are endorsed by groups like the Sierra Club.

Mr. Speaker, this is what the American public is asking for. They're asking for us to get together, to use our knowledge, to collect information, to use that data, and to come up with a plan that will do the things that you've heard talked about here.

The very premise of this is just so simple, which is that this land is your land. It's the idea with the riches of this land and the natural resources, if we use them wisely, if we take those revenues and reinvest, that we can continue to do what we've always done—out-innovate, out-moving products to market—and do it in a way that protects and the natural park system that we have in this country. We can have it both ways if we're smart, but it needs to start here. It needs to start with a plan.

It makes no sense to anyone I talk to on the plains of southern Minnesota that we're spending over \$1 billion a day and sending it to countries that hate us. They will hate us for free. We can keep the money at home, reinvest in the infrastructure, make sure the outdated locks and dams on the Mississippi are up to where they need to be to quickly move those farm products from the upper Mississippi down to the gulf and to the markets around the world. Those things can be done.

You heard each of our Members talk about the idea that we're reinvesting royalties. This Nation needs to make sure we're more efficient. We need to conserve on our energy needs, but to do so takes research; to do so takes in-

vestment. We have to upgrade our power grid. We have to make sure we're using smart grid technology and using the software and the technologies available to make sure we're using every bit of energy the most efficiently. We can take these revenues from the sale of the resources that are there, extract the resources in an environmentally sound manner, and take those back and put them into the research, into the infrastructure, into the ability to move forward.

For example, in my district in southern Minnesota, we're very proud. We're the fourth leading producer of wind energy in this Nation. You can see the beautiful windmills stretching across there and producing a large amount of our power. Yet the reality is Minnesota is one of the most coal-dependent States in the Union because of the nature of where it's at, so we simultaneously need to make sure we're doing that in the most efficient, effective, and environmentally sound manner while we're being realistic about what our power needs are.

This Nation and the world will become energy hungry like it has never seen as 50 percent more energy will need to be produced by 2025. We need to be smart on how we do it. The country that harnesses the innovation, that harnesses the ability to be energy independent will lead into the future. We can't afford to fall behind. We can't afford to allow the resources we've been blessed with to be squandered and not used and invested for our children's future.

So I have to tell you, as this has been worked on, to me, one of the most reassuring things about our great democracy is how this committee and this bipartisan Energy Working Group have gotten together outside the constraints of existing politics, outside the constraints of existing committees and has brought Members—new Members, seasoned Members, more liberal Members, more conservative Members—with a very clear idea: making sure that we use our resources effectively, become more energy independent, diversify our energy portfolio, and do so without raising a single tax; and making sure our infrastructure is modern, making sure it is efficient and effective and, in the long run, making us more competitive. So there are jobs that will be created by this; there is the ability to pay down the deficit that will be created by this; and there is a sense of pride that we will have as a Nation.

Back in March, President Obama challenged us to reduce our oil imports by a third over the next 10 years. To meet that challenge, there is only one plan sitting on the table right now that has the ability to do that, which is this piece of legislation. I have to say it's very gratifying to work on this. I very much feel that the American people are hungry for a bipartisan, commonsense ability to compromise where we need to, that there is the ability to bring the right research to bear and the ability to inspire the American innovative

spirit to get there and to do so with a set outcome.

This is real. This isn't talk. This isn't like, oh, we should become energy independent. I hear a lot of people complain about coal all the time. The reality of the matter is, if you're here today and complaining about coal, we need to turn the lights and the microphones off because they're being powered by that. Without another solution to that, we're not going to get any closer to what we'd like to see—affordable, clean American energy that is powering our businesses and powering our homes.

As the gentleman said, this isn't just an American Dream. This could become an American reality, and it could start as soon as we get this thing moved through.

So, again, to my colleagues, I thank you for putting the energy and the effort into this. I thank the gentleman for continuing to hold us together. I thank him for being ahead of the curve as this group has been for the past several years. As for the American public, we're getting right in lockstep with them as to what they want to see us do.

So I encourage my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, and their constituents to continue to engage in this and to talk to their Representatives about becoming part of this group. If you're really tired of the bickering and if you're really tired of the gridlock and if you're really tired of our not spending our money at home on our energy and on our ability to create jobs here, this is your solution, and you've got a spectrum of folks. It isn't a Democratic issue. It's not a Republican issue.

To the gentleman from Pennsylvania, I have great appreciation for the work that you're doing.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman from Minnesota for his comments.

As he was describing the issue about making sure that we clean up our environment, the reason is that this bill pays for those things.

We know, for example, that the waterways just in the Great Lakes alone is a \$30 billion problem with regard to pollution that has to be cleaned up. We know of our coal-fired power plants that 40 percent of them have inadequate or no scrubbers, and we need to clean them up.

The point is that shutting them down is not going to reduce the cost of electricity, and it's not going to clean up the environment when those jobs simply go over to other countries where they do manufacturing with little or no pollution controls because that still comes back over to our Nation. Keep in mind that this bill does not raise taxes, that it doesn't borrow from other countries, that it doesn't buy oil from OPEC, and that it doesn't put us more into debt.

I will yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER), but I first want to yield to another gentleman

from Pennsylvania, Mr. PAT MEEHAN, who is one of our new colleagues here, to also comment on this bill.

Mr. MEEHAN. I rise in support of the Infrastructure Jobs and Energy Independence Act. Let me first just start with the element of process because I want to follow up on what the gentleman from Minnesota was so articulate in explaining.

On the merits, we can speak to why this is right for America, but today we're seeing scrutiny of the inability of the Congress to come together with commonsense solutions that address the real needs of the American people today and that will help us put people back to work today. Right before us here, we have just such a bill—one that enjoys bipartisan support in which you have leadership from both sides identifying the ability for us to use existing resources. Much like the way today we use the tax on gas, this allows us to generate the revenue to support the creation of a real commitment to infrastructure.

□ 1620

As a member of the Transportation Committee, I struggle with the reality of the tremendous challenges we have from bridges to roads to waterways across the Nation.

We have an opportunity to address that need. We have an opportunity to do it without having to continue the greatest wealth transfer in the history of America, which is the petro dollars we are spending to foreign nations. It is time for us to join together and support the Infrastructure Jobs and Energy Independence Act.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

What he is referring to also is taking care of our infrastructure, which has aged so much, and it's just a massive problem. I know it is something that the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is committed to finding some solutions.

I now yield to Congressman BILL SHUSTER of Pennsylvania, one of the great leaders of this effort. I am proud that he's a colleague from Pennsylvania, and his commitment is second to none with trying to find some solutions to rebuild America.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank my friend from Pennsylvania. Thank you for bringing us all together here on the floor this evening to talk about such an important issue and an important bipartisan piece of legislation.

H.R. 1861, the Infrastructure Jobs and Energy Independence Act, is a bill whose time has come. We came together, Republicans and Democrats, to figure out ways to find the funds without raising taxes to invest in America's infrastructure. And this bill does that from investing in clean energy, rebuilding America's aging locks, dams, bridges and roads, creating jobs which, of course, all the American people are very focused on; and this bill will do just that.

It invests in cleaning up our environment and it, again, has one of the largest infrastructure investments in the history of the United States. With this bill we can do that and, again, it doesn't raise taxes. Opening up our offshore resources and bringing that energy to bear to make us less energy independent is absolutely critical.

In Pennsylvania we know firsthand with the Marcellus shale gas play that's there. It gives Pennsylvania a second chance, a second chance to revitalize our economy in Pennsylvania and once again become one of the driving States in the economy of the United States of America. So we know that firsthand, and it was Pennsylvania 150 years ago with its coal and its oil that was found there that made Pennsylvania so key in the growing and the building up of America.

I want to focus on the funding that would go towards transportation, and my colleague has a great visual aid up there talking about the needs, almost a trillion dollars we need to invest over the next 15, 20 years in our roads and bridges. Aviation, \$87 billion; our dams are very much in need; sewer and water, we have about a \$300 billion backlog across this country to rebuild the infrastructure, to get rid of sewage waste and make sure we have clean drinking water; \$5 billion in inland waterways and locks and dams, which are so critical.

This country grew up, became a power because of our waterways and able to move goods at a very inexpensive rate. We need to revitalize those to continue to use those waterways that we have naturally. But it takes money to rebuild those locks and dams.

When you look around America, I think everybody has driven across a pothole or sees a bridge that's crumbling or many of us live with tremendous congestion and, in fact, the congestion is crippling America. It costs American commuters approximately \$115 billion a year because of wasted time and fuel, and those numbers continue to rise; 4.8 billion hours per year Americans are stuck in traffic. We have to find out a way to reinvest in the infrastructure that's made our country.

When you talk about trade, how can you talk about trade and increasing trade if you can't figure out how to get those bulldozers, those Caterpillar tractors that are going to be shipped overseas. If you can't get them from Peoria, Illinois, to the ports of Philadelphia and the ports of Los Angeles to send them over there, they're going to sit in those yards.

We've got to figure out a way to get commerce, not only in foreign markets, but also it's coming into this country. It's the transportation system that's absolutely vital to that.

Today we currently are spending about \$44 billion on our transportation system, highways, bridges, transit systems, when we actually should be spending at the Federal level about \$62

billion. That number is going down because of our budget constraints. So we have got to find new revenues, and Congressman MURPHY's H.R. 1861, this plan that we support in a bipartisan way, is going to do just that, get the funds to be able to invest in our infrastructure.

Our infrastructure, by the way, when you look back to the Constitution of the United States, a lot of people say, well, government shouldn't be investing in a lot of things. And I agree, there's a lot of things we do in Washington, DC we shouldn't be investing in; but transportation is not one of those.

From the time of our Founding Fathers in article I of the Constitution, it talks about the Federal Government regulating commerce with foreign nations and among the several States regulating and encouraging commerce to build post offices and post roads. The post roads of the 1800s are the highways and byways of today.

This Nation wouldn't be the great Nation it was if it weren't connected. And James Madison, the Father of the Constitution said: "The power of establishing post roads must, in every view, be a harmless power, and may, perhaps, be judicious management, become productive of great public convenience. Nothing which tends to facilitate the intercourse between the States can be deemed unworthy of the public care." Madison made that argument.

Also early on in our history, under the Jefferson administration, they authorized the building, 100 percent Federal dollars, of Route 40, which went from Baltimore into the Ohio territory. They authorized it under Jefferson, and the construction was completed under Madison. It opened up the territory, the Ohio Territory, to be able to produce commerce and prosperity to America. So early on in our Nation, the Founding Fathers knew the importance of our waterways, of building roads, of connecting this country.

And I on this side of the aisle can proudly say that it's been a Republican tradition in the United States Government and the United States Congress. Abraham Lincoln built the transcontinental railroad, not in the middle of a recession, but in the middle of the great Civil War.

He knew how important it was to connect America, to make sure that we move commerce in an efficient way and a safe way. From there, Teddy Roosevelt building the Panama Canal, which connected the two coasts together by water, extremely important for us to become an international power in commerce and in trade.

And then, of course, Eisenhower coming back from World War II, seeing what the Germans did with being able to move their troops around, had the idea that not only would it be good for America's security, but it would be good for America's commerce to connect this country. And that's exactly what he went about doing in the 1950s:

we built the interstate highway system.

I have talked to many of my colleagues that have said the roads have been built, we don't need to spend on them. But they're crumbling; they need to be rebuilt. And one of the facts that I think we all ought to remember, it took us 65 years to go from 200 million to 300 million people, and we crossed that threshold in about 2005 or 2006. It's only going to take us 30-some years to go from 300 million to 400 million.

This Nation is going to continue to grow. We've got to be able to move people; we've got to be able to move our products throughout this country, to the ports to be able to trade globally. So this is something that has to become a national priority.

I believe that this bill, 1861, will help it to become a reality with the funding levels needed to invest in our transportation system. Again, you invest in transportation, you can see the return on investment, whether it's economic development or jobs created in the short term from building it or the long term and the commerce that it produces and the efficiencies that it allows our businesses to have.

Again, I thank the gentleman for bringing us together on a bipartisan basis. I would hope that more of our Members would sign up for this bill so we can push it to the finish line.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank my friend from Pennsylvania for his comments and in helping to lay out how we need to lay out America's infrastructure, clean up our environment and do this without raising taxes, borrowing, or buying more from OPEC.

I now yield to another one of the cosponsors and another Pennsylvanian whose district is just north of mine, Mr. JASON ALTMIRE.

□ 1630

Mr. ALTMIRE. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, we should do this more often, have a bipartisan discussion on the floor. We have debates. We have bipartisan interaction, but we don't have this type of situation occur very often where we have Members from all across the country, from all political points of view that have come together in support of a piece of legislation that is going to impact the country. It's going to impact all of our districts. There is no district in the country that is not going to see a positive benefit from the legislation that we are discussing here today, H.R. 1861.

When I'm home, I hear from constituents all the time about infrastructure. And in southwestern Pennsylvania, we have 1,000 structurally deficient bridges. We have roads that are in great need of modernization and improvement, and we need to invest in our locks and dams. The district that I represent along two different rivers in southwestern Pennsylvania has six locks and dams that average more than

84 years old, and they're crumbling and they need help.

We have a discussion every day in this Congress about the importance of Federal investment and the wisest use of money and taxpayer funds. I can't think of anything that we could be doing in this country that's more important domestically than improving our infrastructure, than repairing our roads and bridges, our locks and dams, our airports.

The waterways commerce that has been discussed here tonight means billions of dollars in southwestern Pennsylvania, and it's critically important for the entire country. Our roads and bridges need to be repaired. I talked about the thousand bridges in southwestern Pennsylvania. We have 6,000 just in Pennsylvania as a State that are in need of repair. So this bill takes a critical step in answering the fundamental question that we all deal with every day. That's great, I'll hear, that's fine. We need to improve our infrastructure, but where's the money going to come from? Where are we going to get the funds to do this investment? Hundreds of billions of dollars are required to complete or even make a dent in the work that needs to be done with the infrastructure in this country. How are we going to pay for it?

Well, currently we have a Federal highway trust fund that's 18.4 cents per gallon of gas purchased in the country. That trust fund annually runs out of money before the end of the fiscal year. Every year we find ourselves scrambling just to maintain our current infrastructure.

What the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY) has done in introducing H.R. 1861 is come up with an alternative source of revenue that does not include raising taxes. It does not include finding revenue from some other program or transferring funds from some other priority for the country. It increases the amount of money that's available by doing something that I think we all agree we need to do in this country and that's explore our own domestic resources for energy, because if there is any issue that I hear about as often or more often than transportation infrastructure, it's energy. It's this country's energy resources and why aren't we tapping into our own reserves and why aren't we exploiting the use of coal and natural gas and in this case offshore drilling to increase our domestic energy supply.

We have had many discussions and will in the future on this floor about the necessity of getting ourselves off foreign oil, of increasing our domestic energy reserves. And what this legislation does is increase the supply of our own domestic resources, yes, which is critically important; but it then takes the royalties, it takes the money that is generated from that and applies it to our much needed infrastructure repair.

So what does this bill do? This bill expands offshore drilling and uses the

permit and royalty revenue to fund the infrastructure improvements and clean energy technology—solar, wind, hydro—the things that everybody in this country wants to support, but there hasn't been the money to maintain and upgrade that technology and do the innovations that are necessary in the future.

The revenue goes towards repairing roads, bridges, locks and dams, developing that renewable energy structure, developing clean coal technology, and improving nuclear technology. Twenty percent of the domestic energy supply with electricity comes from the nuclear technologies, and it helps develop alternative fuel vehicles. I hear all the time the internal combustion engine is a century-old-plus technology.

With all of these wonderful things that we have done in this country, can't we find a way to make a car run on something other than gasoline? It seems like something we should have done a long time ago. We haven't done it yet. We're making progress. This bill helps us get there, whatever that technology may be, whether it be electric, natural gas; some advocate hydrogen. But it does the R&D that's necessary to pursue those technologies. And 10 percent of the drilling revenues are set aside to pay down the national debt. Nobody can argue with that. So it creates a new pot of money that doesn't exist currently that's going to be used to pay down our debt, expand our energy resources, and repair our roads and bridges and our locks and dams.

I just can't imagine there is a more worthwhile piece of legislation and a piece of legislation that impacts everybody in a greater way in this Congress. So I would say to my friend from Pennsylvania, thank you for your leadership on this issue. And to the Members from across the country who have spoken here tonight, I hope that is a message not only to this Congress but to the entire country that, yes, we can come together as a Congress. There are things that we agree with on a bipartisan basis; there are things that we can do to improve the financial situation in this country, to improve our roads and bridges, to get ourselves off of our dependence on foreign oil, and to cultivate our own domestic resources. And we are going to get this done.

I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his support and insight into this.

Several of my colleagues have noted that this is a rare moment on the House floor. We actually have people from both sides of the aisle coming together during this Special Order hour, Mr. Speaker, and talking about an issue where we have to find agreement.

Now, if this was one of those times when we were in disagreement and insults were being hurled back and forth, the galleries behind me would be filled with the press reporting on this. Prob-

ably this Special Order won't be reported on much at all because Members are actually coming together with a common plan and a common goal to say we recognize we need jobs, we need to clean up our environment, we need to have an energy source, we need to do this without debt. And as my colleague from Pennsylvania just pointed out, this bill actually returns money to the Treasury and helps reduce the debt by a percent every year.

I might also add, the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, talked about this concept of using energy to pay for transportation when he said on September 15 in an address in front of the Economic Club of Washington, D.C., he said the following:

I'm not opposed to responsible spending to repair and improve infrastructure. But if we want to do it in a way that truly supports long-term economic growth and job creation, let's link the next highway bill to an expansion of American-made energy production. Removing some of the unnecessary government barriers that prevent our country from utilizing its vast energy resources could create millions of new jobs. There's a natural link between the two. As we develop new sources of American energy, we're going to need modern infrastructure to bring that energy to market.

Talking more about this bill and issues and how this will help us throughout the Nation, I turn to another one of my colleagues from Pennsylvania who's here, MIKE FITZPATRICK.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I thank my friend from Pennsylvania for his leadership on this legislation. I think you are absolutely right that this is a bipartisan moment here in the House. Members from both sides of the aisle coming together around a common goal. Many from Pennsylvania recognize that if this bill becomes law, it would be not just great for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, but we'll see jobs created in the private sector, and it'll be good for our great Nation. So I rise in support of one of the few bipartisan plans for energy independence, job creation and infrastructure investment, the bill H.R. 1861.

I'm a proud cosponsor of this legislation because it addresses America's energy problems. It puts in place a plan to start rebuilding our country's aging infrastructure. And, most importantly, it creates American jobs. From the gas pump to electric bills, increased energy costs are straining American families and hurting American businesses. The U.S. Energy Information Administration has projected that the cost of heating our homes and offices will undoubtedly rise this winter.

Bernard Crandley, Bill Edmonds, and Richard Barkman, constituents of mine from the Eighth District of Pennsylvania, have recently contacted me and shared their concerns with these increased costs as winter approaches. In just the last 2 years, families are spending over \$2,000 more on fueling

their cars. Moreover, the population of the United States continues to soar above 300 million, which means that traffic congestion will only get worse, especially in our area, the northeastern section of the United States. The 2009 Urban Mobility Report finds that traffic congestion in the top 437 urban areas resulted in major choke points and bottlenecks, causing Americans to lose 4.2 billion hours and 2.9 billion gallons of fuel sitting in traffic jams.

□ 1640

Congestion hinders our progress in improving air quality, as vehicles caught in stop-and-go traffic emit far more pollutants than they do when operating without frequent breaking and acceleration. This means that our energy costs will only continue to rise.

The focus in Washington over the last several months has been our Nation's \$14.8 trillion debt and the growing annual deficit. The current magnitude of our debt crisis has forced us to address these concerns with a renewed sense of urgency. Our national debt is growing at nearly \$60,000 per second; and with each second that passes, our children and grandchildren inherit more of this burden.

Of course, the issue of our Nation's fiscal health and job creation go hand in hand. With unemployment hovering steadily at 9 percent nationwide and our manufacturing sector waning, the number one issue at hand now is how to put people back to work. At town hall meetings across the Eighth District of Pennsylvania, I have been listening to thousands of people, including small business owners, unemployed workers, and families struggling to make ends meet. The consistent message is that Washington must provide certainty and stability before our economy can begin to grow again and start adding new family-sustaining and good-paying jobs.

H.R. 1861 provides solutions to these problems in several ways. First, it addresses the need to lower energy costs by authorizing the responsible and environmentally sound leasing of Federal lands on the Outer Continental Shelf for oil and gas exploration. The U.S. Department of the Interior estimates that we have between 86 billion and 115 billion barrels available off our shores. This is enough oil and gas to replace imports from Venezuela and Saudi Arabia for the next 80 years.

In addition to oil and gas exploration, the bill would invest in energy efficiency for our buildings and factories, which waste between 20 and 40 percent of the energy that they consume, and invest in renewable and alternative energy sources and technologies like responsible wind power, solar, hydrogen fuel cells, and electric vehicles.

H.R. 1861 moves us toward energy independence without paying hundreds of dollars per barrel of oil to OPEC and other hostile countries, spending billions daily on importing foreign oil,

raising taxes, or increasing our national debt to China and elsewhere.

Second, this bill would take billions in proceeds from these drilling leases and directly fund much needed construction and infrastructure projects. In my home State of Pennsylvania, our infrastructure is in desperate need of repair. We have bridges and roads that date back to the Civil War, and traffic congestion is a daily hassle. There is near unanimous agreement that we must invest in our Nation's infrastructure, but the question remains of how to pay for it. The President and some Democrats in Congress have suggested that we use taxpayer dollars in the form of a second stimulus package. This bill funds infrastructure investment using private sector dollars, not taxpayer money or borrowed Chinese dollars. This innovative approach will allow for the private sector to help fund our recovery without adding to the deficit.

And most importantly, H.R. 1861 would put countless Americans back to work. Offshore oil exploration is estimated to create 1.2 million quality jobs annually, and for every \$1 billion invested in our infrastructure, an estimated 30,000 good-paying, long-term jobs are created for contractors, construction workers, engineers, steelworkers, building trades, and others.

Since the beginning, I have made jobs my top priority, supporting legislation designed to incentivize hiring and create an atmosphere where small businesses will grow. I welcome President Obama's recent entrance into the work already being done by the House of Representatives to address the unacceptably high unemployment rate. It is important that Congress put aside partisan politics and put America back on the track to prosperity. I call on the Senate and the President to pass the jobs bill that the House of Representatives has already passed with bipartisan support.

As the Congress debates various methods of economic growth and job creation in the coming weeks, I'm hopeful that we will take an approach which incorporates the common sense outlined in this bill. Doing so will require a spirit of bipartisan cooperation to be successful. It will not be easy, but I will continue to focus my energy on creating a strong American economy and a brighter future for our children and our grandchildren.

I thank my friend from Pennsylvania.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. JOE DONNELLY.

Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana. I thank my esteemed colleague, who also serves in the Naval Reserves. We thank you for your service to our country in that role as well.

This is an extraordinary bill that is about jobs, jobs, jobs, energy independ-

ence, and a stronger America. It cuts across party lines and solves so many problems that we face, including assisting in bringing our deficit down. It is a commonsense piece of legislation that puts the United States first.

We have vast energy resources, and we should be utilizing them. Instead of sending \$500 billion a year overseas to other countries that, as my friend from Minnesota said, we don't have to pay them to make sure they like us, they'll just not like us without any payment at all, what we need to do is stand up for America, to not worry about whether or not we can keep other countries happy in order to obtain their oil.

We need to stand up for America—our own natural gas, our own ethanol, our own biodiesel, our own nuclear, our own wind, our own solar. In doing that in all of these areas, you put other people to work. In the steel mills of northern Indiana, where I live, these mills are pumping out product for the oil patch. They're pumping out product to make the wind turbines. Across the board, you see jobs created in Indiana. But that applies to all 50 States.

You have almost a trillion dollars for roads and bridges that will be built throughout our country. And when you look at this, this answers the call. When folks say how can we get America to work together, how can we get America to stand up for itself, this answers the call: people going back to work; the deficit being reduced; manufacturing here in the United States. Across the board, it strengthens our Nation. So instead of wondering about how we can move forward, we have an answer as to how to do that.

I'm thrilled to be working with my colleagues to work together to strengthen our Nation, to reduce our deficit, to make it in America, and to become energy independent. We have enough natural gas in this country—just natural gas alone—to run our vehicles for the next hundred years. If we go across the spectrum, we can create incredible wealth and an incredible future for our Nation.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman from Indiana.

I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. I thank the gentleman. I thank all the speakers today.

Mr. Speaker, you just witnessed something—an hour-long discussion on energy policy that did not demonize producers of energy and did not demonize conservation groups, did not point out problems on the other side and did not become political. It put out solutions, answers that are workable, backed by facts and ready to be implemented.

We can do this. The American people deserve us to do exactly this. I encourage you and everyone in this Chamber to get behind this.

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. I thank all the speakers today.

Let me wrap up by saying this. In Pennsylvania, we're coal country;

we're natural gas; we're the headquarters of nuclear; and we recognize we have a responsibility as a Nation to take care of our country and be good stewards of our environment. We also have to make sure we are creating jobs in America.

But I want to tell you something else. While people are out there criticizing oil, I still believe we can do it better. And one of the things to keep in mind is, when we're sending \$129 billion in foreign aid every year to OPEC, we're paying for their bridges and their highways; and that OPEC money has a way of finding its way to countries like Iran and using that to fund terrorists who are attacking America, hurting our soldiers and maiming them. I've seen enough of them in the hospitals that I work with in the Navy.

Let me tell you, that alone, Mr. Speaker, is reason to pass a bill like this and stop harming our soldiers and our citizens in paying for terrorism. Instead, let's pass the Infrastructure Jobs and Energy Independence Act. Let's keep our money at home; let's create jobs; let's keep America safe; and let's do this right.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1650

ELECTING A CERTAIN MEMBER TO A CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the House Republican Conference, I send to the desk a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 447

Resolved, That the following named Member be and is hereby elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

(1) COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES.—Mr. Amodei.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and as a compliment to my colleagues who just left the floor, I'd like to compliment them for the bipartisanship that was shown. And perhaps bipartisanship is becoming in vogue because this is a bipartisan effort as well.

It is my firm belief that our Nation, while we have some differences on many issues, we do want to unite